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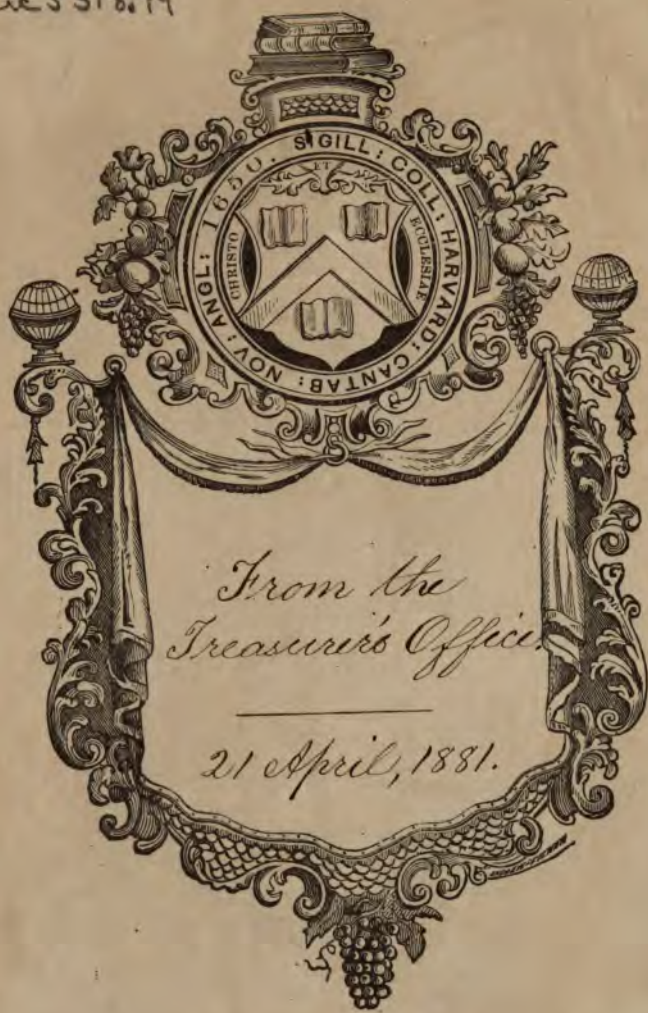
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*President Eliot  
written request of*

The Place of the College Graduate in American Life.

*Geo F Hoar*

AN

*Circle*

# ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

Social Union at Amherst College,

JULY 2, 1879.

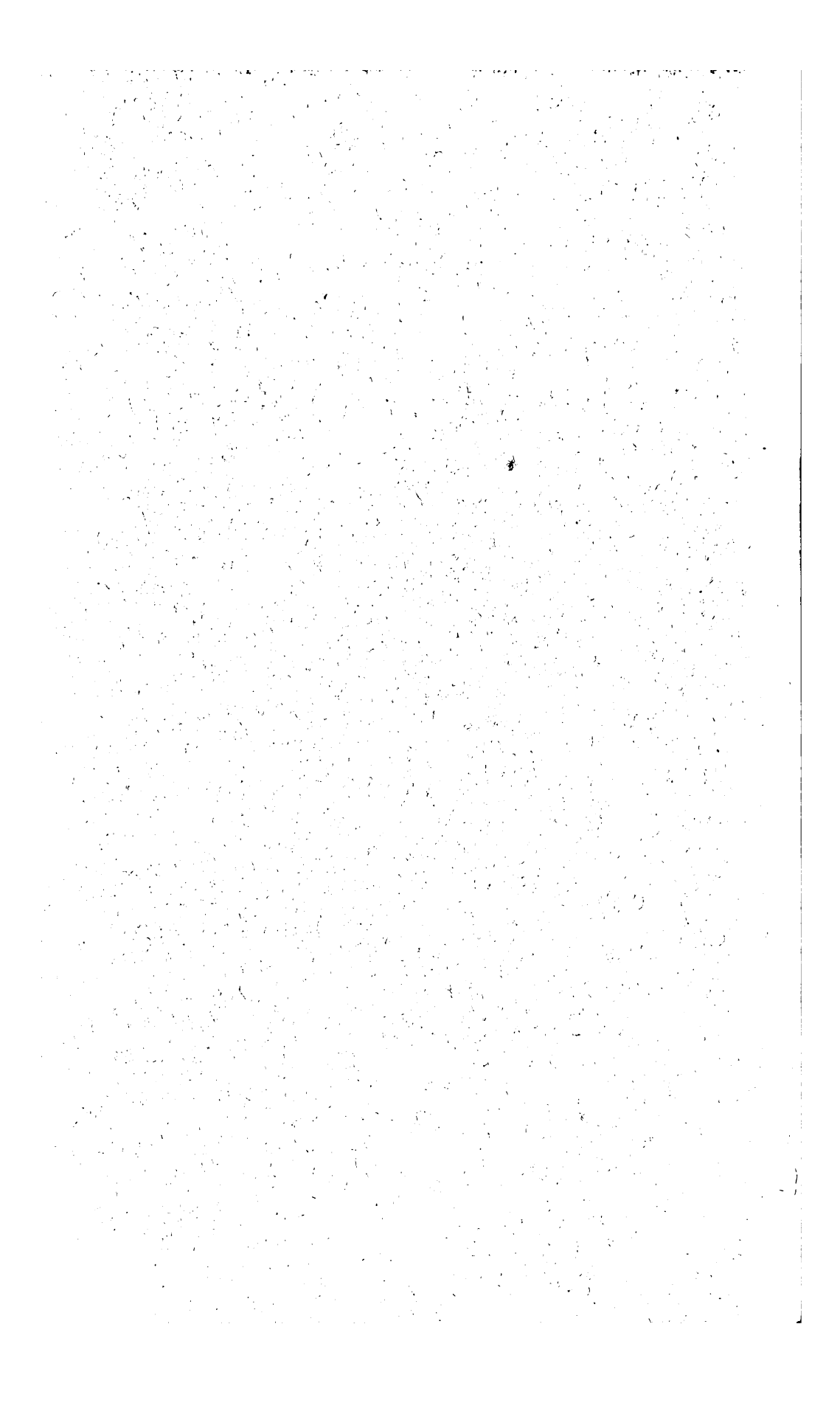
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WORCESTER:

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1879.





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The Place of the College Graduate in American Life.

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*Frisbie*

By GEORGE F. HOAR.

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WORCESTER:

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Edms 5318.79

1881, Sept 21.

From the  
Tribune's Office.

## ADDRESS.

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I AM afraid that in accepting your invitation I have consulted my own pleasure rather than yours. I do not think you can know how unspeakably grateful to a man jaded with the care and work of public life, are expressions of good will that come to him from a company of scholars. You can hardly conceive how delightful the opportunity to change the scene by a visit to a famous college on the days of its high festival. It is like being a guest in some stately baronial hall, rich with association and tradition, from which have issued forth, and shall again, in each generation, brave knights, wise statesmen, illustrious scholars ; whose walls are hung with portraits of famous wits to whom it has been native or hospitable ; its cabinets rich with the contributions of science ; its libraries stored with rare manuscripts and priceless editions ; with its stories of royal visits, and its chambers where illustrious children were born, or illustrious guests have slept.

It is touching and pleasant to see how the men who have won the great honors and prizes of the most civilized nations, have valued the good-will of



their colleges. Canning, in one of his most famous speeches near the end of his brilliant career, claimed the sympathy of the House of Commons on account of the sacrifice he had made to his conscientious conviction in favor of Catholic emancipation. Said he :—

“From the earliest dawn of my public life—aye, from the first vision of youthful ambition—that ambition has been directed to one object above all others. Before that object all others vanished into comparative insignificance; it was desirable to me beyond all the blandishments of power, beyond all the rewards and favors of the crown. That object was to represent the university in which I was educated. I had a fair chance of accomplishing this object when the Catholic question crossed my way. I was warned—fairly and kindly warned—that my adoption of that cause would blast my prospect. I adhered to the Catholic cause and blasted all my long-cherished hopes and expectations. Never to this hour have I stated, either in public or private, the extent of this irretrievable sacrifice; but I have felt it not the less deeply. It is past and I shall speak of it no more.”

There are men from whom the great intellect, the public service, the marvellous eloquence of Webster, cannot extort forgiveness for the political errors of his later life. But it is hard to find a lover of a New England college who does not surrender at discretion when he reads the two stories,—the one related by Mr. Webster in his autobiography, of the occasion when his father first intimated his intention of sending him to college: “I remember that I was quite overcome and my head grew dizzy. The thing appeared to me so high, and the expense and sacrifice it was to cost my father so great, I could only press his hand and shed tears;”—the other, of that

scene in the room of the Supreme Court of the United States, where, as he concluded the argument that made safe the endowment of every college in America, the few broken words of tenderness for his Alma Mater, bursting from the heart of the strong man, melted bench and bar and audience to tears.

Visiting Oxford eleven years ago, I made the acquaintance of Mr. Cox, the accomplished librarian of the Bodleian. He had found, a few days before, in some crypt, where it had lain for two hundred years, a letter written by Lord Clarendon just after he had landed at Calais, a hopeless exile, on his last flight from the country to which he was never again to return. I have procured a copy, which you may like to hear. The great orator, statesman, historian, lawyer, judge,—counselor, companion and ancestor of monarchs,—flying for his life, in his old age, into a foreign land, from the court, of which, for a generation, he had been the ornament and head, soon as his feet touch a place of safety, thinks of his university. See the noble heart through the simple and stately rhetoric:—

*“ Good Mr. Vice-Chancellor:—*

Having found it necessary to transport my selfe out of England, and not knowing when it will please God that I shall returne againe, it becomes me to take care that the university may not be without the service of a person better able to be of use to them than I am like to be, and I doe therefore hereby surrender the office of Chancellor into the hands of the said university, to the end that they may make choyce of some other person better qualified to assist and protect them, than I am. I am sure he can never be more affectionate to it. I desire you as the last suite I am likely to make to you, to believe that I doe not fly my country for guilt, and how pas-

sionately soever I am pursued, that I have not done anything to make the university ashamed of me, or to repent the good opinion they had once of me, and though I must have no further mention in your publique devotions, (which I have always exceedingly valued,) I hope I shall be always remembered in your private prayers, as

Good Mr. Vice-chancellor.

Your affectionate servant,

CLARENDON.

*Calais, this 7-17 Dec., 1667.*

As compared with the universities of the old world, or even with some of our own, Amherst is but a young college. But she already is in the foremost rank. She has made her ample contribution to science, to literature, to professional and public life. Into whatever paths your feet may go, you can cherish no manlier sentiment than to love

“ This glorious lady with the eyes of light,  
And laurels clustering round her lofty brow ;”

—like Canning, to deem her approbation the highest honor and prize of life ;—like Webster, to bring your best powers, if need be, to her service and defence ;—like Clarendon, in misfortune and sorrow, to find comfort in the thought that you have done nothing to make her ashamed of you.

It is certainly a hopeful sign, or rather an emphatic proof of the great regard in which a college training is held, that we celebrate with so much interest the days on which classes of young scholars take their place in the life of the country. Every new state, as it comes into the great family, hastens to establish its university. Men who have enjoyed, men who have been denied these advantages in

their own youth, vie with each other in liberal benefaction. The voluntary gifts made by private citizens to universities and colleges, estimating only those large enough to be mentioned in the newspapers, and only those which came in that way to the notice of the bureau of education, amounted in 1872 to more than \$8,000,000, and in 1873, the last year before the great depression of business, to \$11,226,977. The number of young men who receive the degrees of our colleges, not including the professional schools, is a little more than thirty six hundred annually.

I am therefore brought naturally and almost inevitably to this topic—THE PLACE OF THE COLLEGE GRADUATE IN AMERICAN LIFE.

I might well hesitate, coming from other studies, to deal with a subject which has been the theme of so many abler speakers, and which must have filled so large a space in the instructions of this place. What I have to say is simple and fragmentary. But upon a matter so vital, every suggestion may have its value. It will be something, even to make commonplaces more commonplace; something, out of the experience of life, to add the testimony of a man of the world to the axioms, the truisms, which you have heard from the college pulpit or the professor's chair.

The longer I live, and the more carefully I study the influences which affect the political action or determine the history of this people, the more I am impressed with the need of the constant reiteration

of a few very old and very simple truths. Every child that is born needs to learn for himself to walk, and to talk, and to understand the meaning of common words. Every new citizen, whether he grow into this freedom from infancy, or come from abroad, or come out of slavery, is to learn for himself the simple duties of citizenship. The teacher of the people, and the teacher of the teachers of the people, have first and chiefest of all to teach these plain lessons.

All our constitutions are based upon the theory that the people are to be educated. The influence of the college graduate in the republic may therefore be said to be after all, differing in degree only, so far as this theory is carried out,—the influence of the citizen in the republic. But he ought at least to be the best educated man in the republic. His active life begins with attainments which come to others, if they come at all, painfully and late. Even when others tread the same paths, it is expected of him—

*“ἀίεν ἀριστεύειν καὶ ὑπειρόχον ἐμμέναι ἁλλῶν.”*

I understand the training of the college graduate to differ from that of other citizens in this: In the common school, and the technical or professional school, the principal purpose is to acquire knowledge—something that the pupil is to know and use;—moral and intellectual training is but an incident. The college makes discipline its principal end, and the mere acquisition of knowledge is secondary. A trained intellect, a cultivated taste, a quickened and

elevated sense of honor and moral and religious responsibility—these are the results at which it aims. I do not mean to be understood that the capacity for discerning truth can be developed, without, in the process, acquiring useful truths, or that the taste for what is beautiful in literature, or art, or conduct, is likely to be highly cultivated without gaining the valuable gift of creating or describing such things, which is the function of the orator, or the artist, or the poet. But it is strength, and not weapons, that the college chiefly undertakes to supply. The head of our neighboring university, whose wide range of elective studies has been viewed with some apprehension, still recognizes and admits this truth when he well says: "The worthy fruit of academic culture is an open mind, trained to careful thinking, instructed in the methods of philosophic investigation, acquainted in a general way with the accumulated thoughts of past generations, and penetrated with humility." But all this is matter of definition, more or less exact. We know what a college is, and what a college graduate should be. The possessor of a college degree is entitled everywhere to write after his name—*generosus*—gentleman. He is, as a rule, to belong to a learned profession. He expects to win his bread, and to make his way in life by some occupation which is to be the work of his brain, and not by manual labor.

For a thousand years the country gentleman has been the backbone of England. In every neighborhood, the lord of the manor has dwelt in his ances-

2nd Ed.  
Harvard

tral hall, and under his stately trees, which have descended in his name from eldest son to eldest son. As in all cases of inherited dignities, what are the personal qualities of the individual depends upon accident. Sometimes he has been brought up as the companion of grooms and gamekeepers. Sometimes he has been the best scholar at the great school or the university. Sometimes he is a Squire Western, half ruffian and half boor; sometimes modest, wise, brave, affectionate, like John Hampden or John Winthrop. But neither he nor his neighbors forget that he is a member of a proud and powerful aristocracy. He is never without the sense that,—

“ In his halls is hung  
Armory of the invincible knights of old,”

or without the desire that his descendants shall maintain his place when he is gone, and that the England, the invincible England, of which he and his fathers have been the type, shall endure. The author of “ The Great Governing Families of England ” says :—

“ Seymours or Percies, Russells or Herberts, expect to be great next century as now, plan for the next century as well as this, reckon immediate advantage light when compared with the great objects, the permanent grandeur and power which they desire England to hold, because with the greatness of England, their own is indissolubly bound up. It is the element of resistance, the breeze in the brick, the hair in the mortar, the fibre in the wood, the bone in the body, which they contribute to our social fabric, the quality of permanence which they add to our institutions ”

He has had in old times many a struggle with king and clergy, and in late years his conservative opin-



ions have two or three times had to yield to the manufacturing and trading classes. But the power comes back to his hands. The strifes of English politics are still but contests for his favor. He has for a thousand years held his own in England, and under his lead, with the qualities and temper he has impressed on her, England has held her own, and a great deal that is not her own, in the deadliest fields of battle. Napoleon said on the night after Waterloo, "*Ça a toujours fini de même depuis Crécy.*" "It has always turned out the same way since Cressy."

Now, my young friend, compare the place to which the English gentleman comes but by the accident of birth, with that which you may take, simply at the price of deserving it, in our mighty national life. You may win this place which the English gentleman inherits. Your manor shall be large in exact proportion to your own personal size. You do not need inherited acres, dependent tenantry, or a people bred for fifty generations to the worship of rank. These would be to you nothing but weights. Instead of these things the college enables you to begin life with the qualities which I have described. You have a scholar's capacity for the discernment of truth from falsehood, a scholar's power to make this clear to other men, a scholar's refined taste manifesting itself in conduct and character which so attracts and wins your neighbors to you that they are inclined to accept what you esteem and love, because you esteem and love it. Above all, every man within your influence knows you for a man of absolute in-

tegrity. It was well said by an early American author, now too much neglected, that:—

“ There is no virtue without a characteristic beauty. To do what is right argues superior taste as well as morals; and those whose practice is evil, feel an inferiority of intellectual power and enjoyment, even where they take no concern for a principle. Doing well has something more in it than the mere fulfilling of a duty. It is a cause of a just sense of elevation of character; it clears and strengthens the spirits; it gives higher reaches of thought. The world is sensible of these truths, let it act as it may. It is not because of his integrity alone that it relies on an honest man; but it has more confidence in his judgment and wise conduct, in the long run, than in the schemes of those of greater intellect, who go at large without any landmarks of principle. So that virtue seems of a double nature, and to stand oftentimes in the place of what we call talent.”

✓ The safest property in this country is the knowledge of a profession. It is said that of those persons who engage in trade, nearly ninety-five per cent fail in the course of their lives. Stocks and bonds shrink in value and become worthless. Lands and houses may be weighed down by the burden of taxes. The fire may consume, or the thief break in and steal, the most carefully guarded wealth. But the capacity for a learned profession, once bestowed in that burglar-proof, fire-proof, portable safe, your brain, is secure against every chance which does not destroy life or health. John Quincy Adams advises his son not to engage in political life until he has secured independence. What independence so secure as the mastery of one of the professions which must ever be a necessity to civilized man. Wherever men live together in society, however rude, however refined, the need of humanity

will demand the clergyman, the advocate, and the physician.

I am not undertaking to set forth the dignity of either profession, what are the qualifications for it, or the kind of education it demands. I am only pointing out the natural influence its members may exert over the intellect and conscience of the people. The man whose function is to expound the law of duty, the hope of immortality, the relation of human beings to their Creator; the man whose function is to interpret human law and human justice in their authority over property and liberty and life; the man who knows and applies the science of which the human body is the domain, and the preservation of life and health the end;—these men would seem to command the approaches to the ear and favor of the people. This power is wholly moral. The submission to it is wholly voluntary. It is honorable alike to him who wields it and to him who obeys it. It consists only in the capacity to influence other men by appeals to reason and conscience, and by the force of an upright example.

Behold then our college graduate thus equipped, with trained intellectual powers, cultivated taste, character commanding the respect of men; in the words of Burke, "Educated in science, in erudition, in taste, in honor, in generosity, in humanity, in every liberal sentiment and every liberal accomplishment,"—his profession an endowment of competence and independence; stimulated by great traditions, great opportunities, and great hopes; plant-

ed at the approaches which command the favor of the people. What shall this man do for the State? Surely he cannot mean to disdain the leadership which is ready to his hand. Surely he will not content himself with getting a living, or aim only at the gratification of ambitions which are personal and selfish. He will be conspicuous for a generous public spirit. He is an ever-burning lamp. His biography will be written in the institutions of the community that surrounds him. Here a library will owe its foundation to his efforts. There generations of children will reap the benefit of his labors for a school. Some political tempest of passion and folly has passed over the land. Some human Lucifer—or rather some bringer of darkness and not light—has banded together all that is evil in the state in the service of an unhallowed ambition. There is a spot which the scourge does not seem to have visited. It is the town where this man lives,—or the neighborhood where men have looked to him as a guide :—

“ His strength is as the strength of ten,  
Because his heart is pure.”

There are few things more noticeable about this vast machine of ours which we call our country than its sensitiveness to the individual touch. How many men can you reckon whose education has been exactly your education, whose opportunity was exactly your opportunity, who have begun as you begin, whose brave and devoted lives have affected sensibly and permanently the well being of the whole country.

“The true marshaling of the degrees of sovereign honor,” says Lord Bacon, “are these. In the first place are *conditores imperiorum*, founders of states and commonwealths, such as were Romulus, Cyrus, Cæsar, Ottoman, Ismael.” It is, and will be for generations to come, the peculiar good fortune of this country, that while it has so many of the advantages of an old civilization, this process of founding new communities is perpetually going on. They are springing into life without number, even in the oldest states. The successful manufacturer builds his new village. The inventor of a new mechanism, of a platform scale, or a machine for wicker work, creates a town. At the bidding of the genius of manufacture, cities grow like the palace of Aladdin. Each of these has its own separate life, I had almost said, its own separate immortality. I do not wish to seem to exaggerate, but I can scarcely overstate either the extent or the permanence of the influence on one of these plastic and impressible societies of a single honest and manly life. What is going on in our own neighborhood takes place on a gigantic and imperial scale in the vast spaces of the West. The region drained by the Mississippi and its navigable affluents, extending to New Mexico on the southwest and Colorado on the west, and so on to the northwest where Lewis and Clark’s pass in Idaho opens a gateway in the Rocky mountains, a distance of thirteen hundred miles from northeast to southwest, and more than sixteen hundred from southeast to northwest, making nearly two million

square miles of territory, and nine thousand miles of navigable waters, is occupied by states still in their infancy, or by vacant spaces which still wait the habitation of man. Passing the Rocky mountains, you enter the region scarcely inhabited, scarcely explored, consisting of western Idaho and Washington territories, extending six hundred miles from east to west, and three hundred from north to south,—one hundred and eighty thousand square miles. This territory lies on the future pathway of commerce from Europe and the Atlantic to China and Japan. Southward of this is the region now divided by Arizona, Utah, southern Idaho and the young states of California, Oregon, Nevada and Colorado, making more than seven hundred thousand square miles, rich with mineral wealth, and capable of feeding and clothing the entire population of Europe. The present crop of wheat raised in this country may be multiplied fifty fold. Not more than three per cent of our cotton land has ever been under cultivation. We have within our limits, a greater stock of coal than all other countries combined. "We have," says Dr. Elder, "a sea-coast so deeply indented, and a lake and river system dissecting the mass so thoroughly, that a domain only one-sixth less than the area of the fifty-nine or sixty empires, states, and republics of Europe, and of equal extent with the Roman empire at its largest, is cut for the purpose of internal and external commerce, into twenty islands of the size of Great Britain." This territory, so adapted in situation, in climate,

and in resources, for the abode of the great, powerful, and free people for which it waits, is not without its appropriate ornaments. Rivers that are lakes, lakes that are seas, cataracts like Niagara, or Trenton, or the great falls of the Yellowstone, or the cascades which lend a more than Alpine beauty to the mountains to which they give their name, vast mountain ranges which lift their imperial foreheads to the sun, (Prof. Eliot states that in one chain near the Yellowstone, he counts more than a hundred peaks that are above eleven thousand feet in height, and eight or ten that will reach twelve or thirteen thousand), forests that began their mighty growth ages before the cedars of Lebanon were in the seed, ravines like Yosemite,—all these God revealed when he

“Uncovered the land  
That he hid of old time in the West,  
As the sculptor uncovers the statue,  
When he has wrought his best.”

If Lord Bacon award his foremost place in the degrees of sovereign honor to such founders as were Romulus, Cyrus, Cæsar, Ottoman, Ismael—if he who brings a new state into life, even as an asylum for a clan of banditti, or a restless nomadic tribe, or builds an empire on the ruins of his country's liberties, shall have any honorable rank—what place shall be his who helps to lay in Christian liberty and law, the foundations of an American state? His work, we fondly hope, will be permanent as it is honorable.

What a promise of perpetual life in this marvelous organism of state and nation. Every new state



brings to the entire national life of which it is a part, the fresh and healthful blood of youth. Englishmen like to compare England to an oak, which strikes its roots deep into the ground, and spreads its branches far into the air, and stands for century after century as a shelter for those who gather beneath its shade. But the oak has but a single life, limited by the inexorable law of growth and of decay. A single lightning stroke may shatter its trunk, or a single hurricane tear up its roots. But America may find her type in that wonderful Asiatic tree whose boughs as they extend from the parent trunk, bend over till they touch the earth and strike new root, getting fresher sap and lustier life for the original tree with each added stem, till a whole forest with a thousand trunks grows up, blended in a single but complex organism :—

“ Branching so broad and long, that in the ground  
The bended twigs take root, and daughters grow  
About the mother tree, a pillared shade  
High over arched, and echoing walls<sup>k</sup> between.”

So every new state, first planted from the great parent national trunk, strikes down into the soil. The tree our fathers set covered at first but a little space by the sea-side. It has planted its banyan branches in the ground, it has spread along lake and gulf, over mountain and river, and prairie and plain, till its hardy growth shelters the frozen regions of the far northwest, and its boughs hang over the Pacific, and in good time it will send its roots beneath the waves, and receive under its vast canopy the islands of the sea.

To the leadership which I claim as the function of the college graduate, the holding of public office is by no means essential. More and more, with the diffusion of education and with new communication by steam and telegraph, increases the controlling force of that public opinion of which act of Congress and even judicial decision are but the records. Every morning, New York, Boston, Maine, Oregon, San Francisco, Charleston read the same history on which, every evening, they exchange judgments. This mighty weather bureau of press and telegraph gathers up the signs and portents of the time, from which statute and veto can, with great certainty, be predicted. High public office may oftentimes, though not so often as is commonly supposed, be acquired and retained by unworthy men, and by unworthy means; but a permanent leadership of public opinion—a life-seat in that exalted assembly which, without visible session, ever legislates, and without army or navy, marshal or posse, ever executes its decree—can only be maintained by that combination of sound judgment, unselfish integrity, and absolute sincerity and strength, which make up what we call *character*.

Let no man think that I am advocating what is called by way of reproach, a principle of aristocracy. When I maintain that that man is fitted to be the leader of the people who seeks only and simply their good; whose leadership is conferred by their free consent; whose only instrumentality to gain or to hold power is an appeal to their reason and con-

science ; who gains their ear by the passport of his own spotless life ; and who is fitted for their service by the highest training of the intellectual and moral faculties which they have been able to contrive and to provide, I consider that I am paying to the people themselves the highest possible tribute of reverence and honor. I am but asserting in another form the doctrine of the great Italian philosopher, "that doctrine of liberty, consolatory and full of joy,—how much wiser and more constant are the people than the prince."

The spirit of the scholar is a democratic spirit. The throne of our men of letters, of Bryant and Longfellow, and Whittier and Lowell, is in the popular heart. The welcome given to Agassiz in America was a popular welcome. The ranks of our graduates and professional men are supplied from the same sources which supply the other occupations of the community. They come from the same household. Some accident determined the course of one toward the college, and another toward the shop, or farm, or factory. Your education, after all, is but an advantage in starting, which it will require constant exertion to maintain. The men who make up the bulk of the population of our northern states, who sit on juries, who hold town offices, who carry on farms, who perform skilled labor in shops, who practice the great variety of occupation by which men get a secure and comfortable livelihood, have, as a rule, by no means neglected their own early opportunity in the common school or failed to

profit by press and lecture-room in later life. They desire what is honest and wise. They understand their own interest and that of the state, and in spite of the rude and dangerous forces which are at work in our society, will maintain our national life in freedom and in honor. Whoso seeks to persuade them to follow his lead addresses a tribunal well qualified to sit in judgment on his claim, and well knowing how to supply themselves with leadership, if he should prove unfit.

Let me occupy a few moments in pointing out some of the conditions on which this leadership can be exercised. We have the right to expect that the man whom the public have given the training of the scholar, shall bring to the formation of opinions on questions which concern the public, a scholar's thoroughness of investigation. In urging the need of the scholar in politics, we do not mean that a man should leave the study of Latin and Greek, in which he is a scholar, to express his opinions on politics, in which he is no scholar. We have a right to expect of him that he will not express crude and shallow judgments as to contemporary men and events, of which he would be ashamed if they related to events of two thousand years ago. He must strive especially to study and understand the character of the people to which he belongs. John Hancock declared, at the inauguration of President Willard of Harvard, that that college "was, in some sense, the parent and nurse of the late happy revolution in this commonwealth." If this were true in

any sense, it was because her graduates of that day were profound students of this science. John Adams said of his illustrious kinsman, the greatest popular leader that ever lived in New England, "He has the most thorough understanding of the principles of liberty and her resources in the temper and character of the people."

He must avoid an ignorant and unreasoning fastidiousness in his judgment of other men with whom he is called to act. Let him set up for himself the highest possible standard of duty and conduct. Let him insist that no unrighteousness or injustice stain any action for which his country or his party or himself is responsible. But let him remember in judging of the character and motives of his associates, that the republic in which a majority must govern, is not likely soon to be governed by a majority of men without faults. There are few sayings or doings recorded of George III. which deserve honorable remembrance. But his saying to Lord Sidmouth, "Give me the man who judges one human being with severity and every other with indulgence," deserves to be written in letters of gold. In saying this I am not uttering an empty moral commonplace. I am warning you against a rock on which the public usefulness of many an accomplished citizen has been wrecked. In looking back over the political history of this commonwealth since I came to manhood, I recall a goodly number of men, some who are dead, some who are living, eloquent orators, learned lawyers, fitted by character

and by opinion to be leaders of the people, whose names will be absent from the honorable roll of those who fought in the great civil battle for the freedom of a race. They could not stand by the side of Garrison because of his bitter invectives, or of Wilson because of his political management, or of Sumner because of some fault of taste or temper, and so they gathered up the skirts of their garments about them, and the people watched and waited for their counsel in vain. Mr. Choate wrote in 1855 to his friend at Caraccas:—"Your estate is gracious that keeps you out of our politics. Anything more low, obscene, feculent, the manifold oceanic heavings of history have not cast up. We shall come to the worship of onions, cats, and things vermiculate." And this within six years of the heroic days of 1861.

I spoke in the outset of the education at college as an education not merely of the intellect, but of the moral and religious nature. The leadership to which you must aspire is one to which such an education calls and fits you. The destiny of these plastic political societies is to be determined, not by their laws, but by the sentiments, principles, and opinions of the men of whom they consist. Every nation has behind its constitution, behind its form of government, some sentiment or opinion upon which it rests. Sir Andrew Mitchell, the famous English diplomatist, relates that Frederic the Great, at a review of sixty thousand men in Pomerania, asked the old Prince D'Anhalt, what in the scene

before them he admired the most. "Sire," he replied, "I admire the fine appearance of the men." Frederick replied, "what most excites my astonishment is, that you and I, my dear cousin, should be in the midst of such an army as this in perfect safety. Here are sixty thousand men, who are all irreconcilable enemies to both you and myself; not one among them that is not a man of more strength and better armed than either of us, yet they all tremble at our presence." Behind the whole strength of the monarchy, behind the supporting aristocracy, and the bulwark of army and nobility, was a power mighty enough to snap all these like straws, but kept in check by the vague but all pervading sense of the divine right of the king. The little semi-madman, semi-prophet, kept Europe in a fever of fear and rage, made half the families in his dominion desolate and poor, compelled every young man in Prussia to sacrifice to the king's ambition, the love of life, of comfort, and of home, and died at last seventy-five years old, in his bed. The French people endured for centuries even worse burdens. It was not till the educated men of France had eradicated from the popular mind with their religious belief the worship of the divinity that doth hedge a king, that the French revolution became possible. [It is the peculiarity of this country, that the principles or sentiments upon which it rests, have been asserted in the most solemn and authoritative form in the act which gave it life.]

The Declaration of Independence declared our national unity. It was one nation and not thirteen,



—“one people to whom it became necessary to dissolve the political bonds which had connected them with another, and to assume their <sup>separate</sup> and equal station among the powers of the earth.” It was as representatives of the United States of America, that the Congress declared the separation from England. No American state except Texas ever had a national life. It was as United States that they were declared free and independent by an instrument, in which no one of the individual states is even named. The same instrument which declared the national existence and unity of this people, asserted as a limitation upon the powers of sovereignty, that government has no authority to do anything against right. The British argument was stated by Dr. Johnson, its ablest advocate, in his celebrated tract “Taxation, no Tyranny.” He says:—

“All government is ultimately and essentially absolute, but subordinate societies may have more immunities, or individuals greater liberty, as the operations of government are differently conducted. An English individual, may by the supreme authority be deprived of liberty, for reasons of which that authority is the only judge. In sovereignty there are no gradations. There may be limited royalty, there may be limited consulships, but there can be no limited government. There must in every society be some power or other from which there is no appeal, which admits no restrictions, which pervades the whole mass of the community, regulates and adjusts all subordination, enacts laws or repeals them, erects or annuls judicatures, extends or contracts privileges, exempt itself from question or control, and bounded only by physical necessity.”

This pamphlet of Dr. Johnson, published in 1775, is entitled “An Answer to the Resolution and Ad-

dress of the American Congress." With this doctrine of the British government, the American Congress joined issue by the declaration that the powers which governments derive from the consent of the governed are *just* powers; and by the claim of their newly constituted governments to do only those "acts and things which independent states may of right do." They further declare that it is the right of the people, in instituting a new government, not only to "organize its powers in such form," but "to lay its foundation in such principles as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness." The declaration is prefaced by a summary of these principles, not as in the English charters and bill of rights, grants from the government to the people, but as lying at the foundation of governments, and as of higher and prior authority to government itself. In the constitutions framed for the states in which that largest and most important portion of sovereignty required for local self-government is deposited, the same doctrine with greater particularity and fullness of detail is asserted. The constitution of Virginia adopted one day before the Declaration of Independence was reported, is preceded by what is entitled in the instrument, "A declaration of rights made by the representatives of the good people of Virginia; which rights do pertain to them and their posterity *as the basis and foundation of government.*" In that declaration the people of Virginia say, "that no free government, or the blessings of liberty can be preserv-

ed to any people, but by frequent recurrence to fundamental principles." This sentiment was copied by John Adams into the constitution of Massachusetts of 1780.

I have not time and it would be foreign to the purpose of this discourse to enter upon a vindication of the logical correctness of the proposition laid down in the opening of the Declaration of Independence, and in the bills of rights embraced in our early constitutions. The criticism was made by Mazzini, and I think repeated by Bismark, that they were assertions of rights and not of duties. But these critics consider the form rather than the substance. Though in form a statement of rights, the Declaration of Independence has always been appealed to as a statement of duties. The appeals which have been made to it in our political history, have been to remind the citizens of their duties to other men, and not what they should claim for themselves. These declarations were the expressions of the profoundest convictions of the most religious people on earth at the most religious period of their history. By them they meant to lay the foundations of their government in the moral law. They were no empty declamation. They rang them and sounded them, and tried them and tested them, and made them links in the great chain on which they hung their nation, like the chain fastened by Jove to the highest summit of Olympus by which heaven and earth might hang secure.

I have recited this history to remind you that as sons of a New England college, you are the lineal

successors of the men who wrought out this service to mankind. The great thinkers of the revolutionary age, with few exceptions, were either college graduates, or received the instructions of the college at second-hand from clergymen at whose knees they were trained. John Adams writes to Samuel Adams in 1790, "Your Boston town meetings and our Harvard college have set the universe in motion." I have already cited John Hancock to the same effect. Yale, and William and Mary, and Princeton, may justly make a like claim. The discussions of theology and of the principles of religious liberty and duty, fitted the people for the kindred discussion of political principles. Mr. Ticknor says that one of the most practically wise statesmen then alive, often told him that we never should have had our Revolution, if all the people had not been for a century in the habit of discussing the Westminster Assembly's catechism. If the training of the college fitted your predecessors to be the leaders and guides of the people in founding their nation on fundamental principles of right and duty, surely the colleges of our day are degenerate if they do not fit their graduates to take a lead in that frequent recurrence to those principles which our fathers enjoin upon us as the indispensable condition on which the life of the nation can endure. Never more than to-day was this constant recurrence necessary.

The habit is growing in many influential quarters of deriding what are called sentimental politics. The men who decry sentiment in politics, that is,

the application of the moral law to public conduct, are commonly quite as sentimental as anybody. It is only a question of the kind of sentiment to which they think proper to appeal. The men who sneer at the sentiment of justice, with its simple corollary of equal right, at the sentiments of honor, good faith, disinterestedness, as practical forces in the conduct of government, are quite ready to make and to respond to appeals to the sentiments of hatred, of revenge, of envy, of covetousness, or of personal ambition.

The difficult problems in our national politics at this hour, will nearly all of them be solved if the people will adhere to rules of conduct imposed as restraints in the early constitutions. The sublimity of the principle of self-government does not consist wholly or chiefly in the idea that self is the person who governs, but quite as much in the doctrine that self is the person who is governed. How our race troubles would disappear if the dominant Saxon would but obey, in his treatment of the weaker races, the authority of the fundamental laws on which his own institutions rest! The problem of to-day is not how to convert the heathen from heathenism, it is how to convert the Christian from heathenism; not to teach the physician to heal the patient, but to heal himself. The Indian problem is not chiefly how to teach the Indian to be less savage in his treatment of the Saxon, but the Saxon to be less savage in his treatment of the Indian. The Chinese problem is not how to keep Chinese

laborers out of California, but how to keep Chinese policies out of Congress. The negro question will be settled when the education of the white man is complete.

The Declaration of Independence, beginning with its assertion of the natural freedom and equality which pertain to all men as a birth-right, and its denial of the title of any government to exist in conflict with these rights, ends with the statement that the nation which it then called into life was to do, in its separate and equal station among the nations of the earth, only those things which such states may of *right* do. The Massachusetts bill of rights, beginning with the same assertion of freedom and equality, terminates its comprehensive summary of the maxims of administration essential to the preservation of popular liberty by setting forth "the end that it may be a government of laws and not of men."

Upon these principles as corner-stones our fathers builded their state. What function more exalted for the educated men of the country than to keep alive in the hearts of the people reverence for these great and simple principles of liberty and duty—to defend them with all the powers of reason and argument, to adorn them with all the resources of eloquence and scholarship, to make the people familiar with their history, and with the miracles of peace, of prosperity, of comfort, and happiness they have already wrought for mankind.

The noblest and most fortunate nations, the noblest and happiest men, are those of simple be-

liefs. Wordsworth, the profoundest of English political philosophers, as he is, since Milton, the wisest and greatest of English poets, tells us, speaking of the Swiss republic:—

“ A few strong instincts and a few plain rules,  
Among the herdsmen of the Alps, have wrought  
More for mankind in many a trying hour,  
Than all the pride of intellect and thought.”

These few strong instincts and these few plain rules—*virtus ac fides Helvetiorum*—have kept Switzerland safe for five hundred years in her mountain fastnesses. The few plain rules our fathers framed will be enough for us. Let not their authority be undermined by the indifference or the evil example of our educated men. If they think, like Cicero's patrician, that whatever happen to the republic, their fish-ponds will be safe; or fancy that in defiance of the prohibition of the sixth article of the bill of rights, they can obtain advantages or particular and exclusive privileges distinct from those of the community, or contrive unlawful paths to wealth without adherence to those principles of justice, moderation, industry, and frugality which the eighteenth article enjoins, they will discover their mistake and meet their terrible retribution when the workingman strives to relieve the hardship of his lot by imitating their example. Kearney's constitution never could have found favor with the farmers of California, to whom its adoption was due, but for the previous management of railroad and banking corporations, for which educated New England capitalists are not without large responsibility.

This is the empire to which you are invited. This is the leadership to which you may aspire. To this the teachings of this place fit and summon you. To this the honorable example of your predecessors incites you. *Non potest stare respublica freta veteranis, sine magno subsidio juventutis.* No greater opportunity surely was ever vouchsafed to man. It is a task which may well stimulate you by its difficulties and invite you by its rewards. The last thirty years have brought new elements into our body politic. Our fathers builded their state with that English race whom the wisdom of a thousand years had ripened. It is for your generation to make the restraints of constitutional liberty acceptable to races to whom law has for ages appeared only as tyranny, and liberty been known only in her excesses. Your fathers dealt with men made docile to the teachings of political duty by their simple religious creed. You have to deal with a generation whose audacious skepticism questions the foundations of all faith, and whose positive philosophy declares the belief in God himself "a dissolving dream of the past." But the few strong instincts to which you need to appeal are planted in the heart of universal humanity, and the few plain rules you need to apply are enough for every exigency of the state.

Devoted to this patriotic service, you will reconcile and blend the Grecian idea of the state as a being compared with which all individual existence is valueless and subordinate, and the Christian idea of the state as but an instrument for the welfare of



an immortal and spiritual life. One of the greatest, perhaps the greatest, of the living scientific men of England, in his address at Belfast, as he ended his masterly survey of the domain of science, sought to inspire his auditors by affirming that the topics which he had scarcely touched would be handled by the loftiest intellects when speaker and auditors, "like streaks of morning cloud, shall have melted away into the infinite azure of the past." Rather let me speak in the spirit of the teachings of this place. Your lives, so devoted to patriotism and duty, will bear fruit in that mighty national existence, compared with which the longest human life is but as the pulsation of an artery. More than this: they will return to you their satisfactions and rewards even when that national existence is over, if the power which dismisses a star on its pathway through the skies, promising that in a thousand years it shall return again, true to its hour, and keeps his word, keepeth the promise he hath made to the conscious soul of man,

"and that, which lived  
True life, live on."

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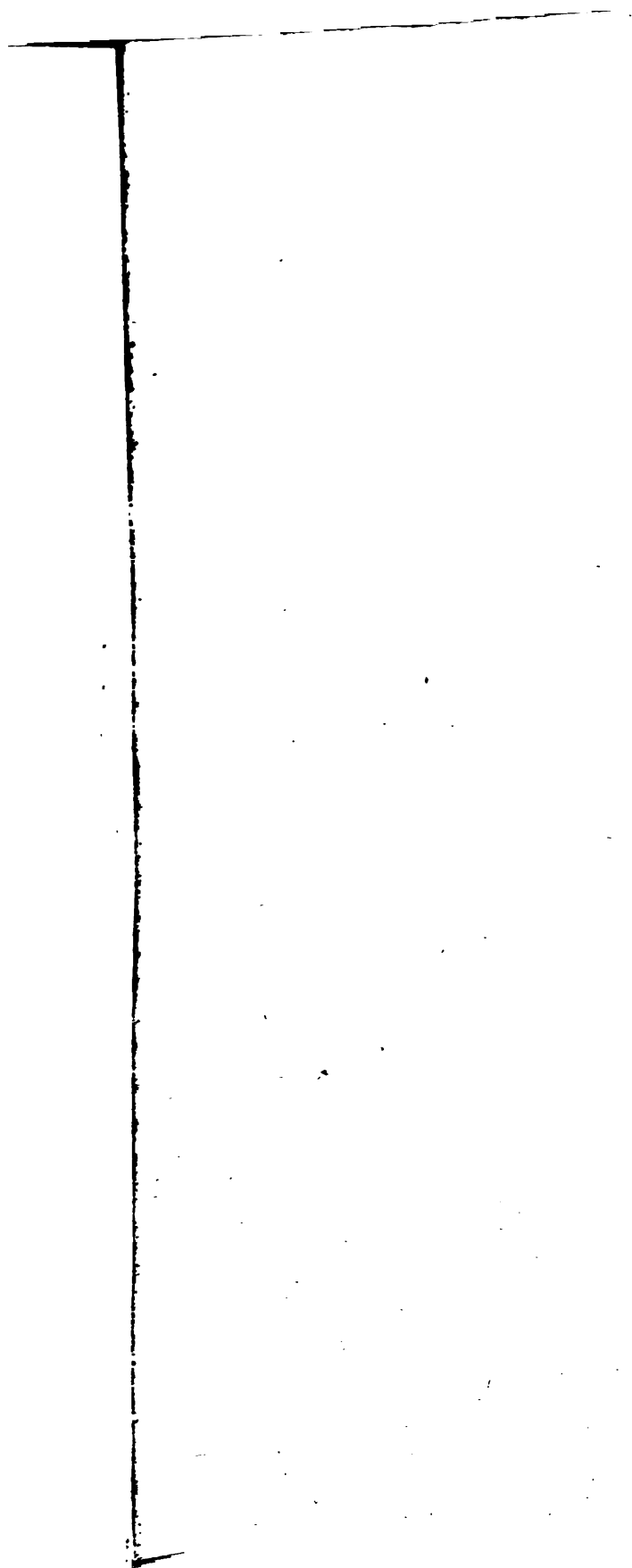
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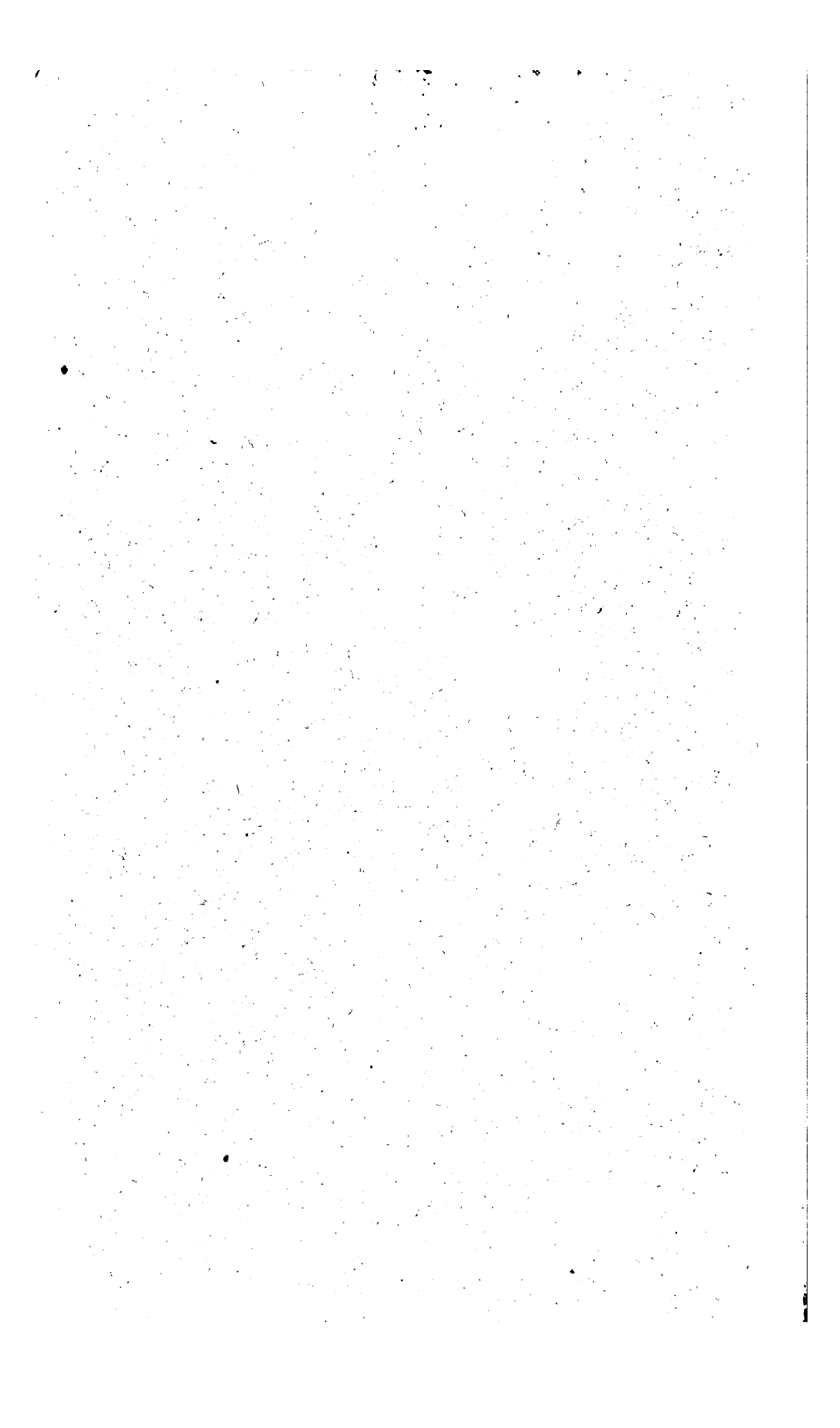
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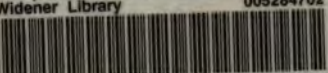


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